

9-21-2012

Thus Have I Heard: The Auditory Hallucination Poems of Miyazawa Kenji

Jon P. Holt

Portland State University, joholt@pdx.edu

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/wll_fac



Part of the [Japanese Studies Commons](#)

Citation Details

Holt, Jon P., "Thus Have I Heard: The Auditory Hallucination Poems of Miyazawa Kenji" (2012). *World Languages and Literatures Faculty Publications and Presentations*. Paper 46.

http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/wll_fac/46

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in World Languages and Literatures Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. For more information, please contact pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

Thus Have I Heard

The Auditory Hallucination Poems of Miyazawa Kenji

Jon Holt
joholt@pdx.edu
Portland State University

2012 Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs
Panel: Japanese Poetry, Literature and Music
September 21, 2012

About the title...

Miyazawa Kenji (1896-1933)

Nichiren Buddhism

The *Lotus Sutra*



Approach

...author comments about his art

...poems attached in those letters

...publication attempts in coterie magazines

...poems and their modified versions

Dating → 1922 to mid-1926

...burst of *genchō* activity after volume one of *Spring and Asura* (April 1924)

...1924-1925

...dates as starting points

...no end points?

...publication in coterie magazines

the mental sketch *shinshō suketchi*, 心象スケッチ

“I stressed my thoughts in the preface of that reckless *Spring and Asura (Haru to shura)*, but I planned to change the places of history and religion, by presenting the different aspects of life revealing its core form.”

Feb. 9, 1925, letter to Mori Sôichi

the mental sketch

shinshō suketchi, 心象スケッチ

I had a feeling, one that I could not ignore, that there was something strange about history, its data, and other things in the space that we feel...It is not that I do not know what free verse (*shi*, 詩) is, but strictly speaking, I felt dissatisfied that my recording of the facts as they were would become confused with something that until now has become a hodge-podge [of meaning].

December 1925, letter to Iwanami Shigeo (publisher)

“no *genchō* or the like”

Feb. 12, 1925

I sent to you two sketches. It would be fine with me if you only used the second one. I chose easy ones where there was no *genchō* or the like in them.

Feb. 12, 1925, letter to Mori Sōichi

genchō poetry qualities

1. short
2. fantasy; no “frame”

genchō poetry qualities

1. short
2. fantasy; no “frame”
3. openness

genchō poetry qualities

1. short
2. fantasy; no “frame”
3. openness
4. not metaphorical; “as is” (?!?)

genchō poetry qualities

1. short
2. fantasy; no “frame”
3. openness
4. not metaphorical; “as is” (?!?)
5. no lyric “I”

genchō (幻聴)

「鬼言（幻聴）」

“Demon Words
(Auditory Hallucination)”

三十六号！

Number 36!

左の眼は三！

Left eye, 3!

右の眼は六！

Right eye, 6!

斑石をつかつてやれ

Hit them with spotted rocks!

genchō or the like

As a term, only appears in *Spring and Asura* (V. 1)
twice (April 1924)

「青森挽歌」 (Aomori Elegy)

「一本木野」 (One-Tree Field)

However, as a phenomenon in the collection...

「陽ざしとかれくさ」 (Sunrays and Hay)

later retitled as published as 「幻聴」

genchō or the like

“Krumbum (*Kurumubon*) smiled.”

“Krumbum smiled doing the puka-puka.”

“Krumbum jumped and smiled.”

“Krumbum smiled doing the puka-puka.”

Both up and downstream and to the left and right there appeared something like a bluish blackish net. Small bubbles flowed up towards the smooth ceiling above that.

“Krumbum was smiling.”

“Krumbum smiled doing the puka-puka.”

“Okay, then why did Krumbum smile?”

“Beats me.”

from “Yamanashi” (Mountain Pear)

Pop tune sampling in “Winter (genchō)”

Moon Deer,
How near
Your soul divine!
Sun Deer,
No fear
In heart of mine.

from “By the Waters of the Minnetonka”
(T.W. Lieurance)



Conclusion

Irisawa Yasuo

“experiment[ing] with a variety of methods”

“two great features of Kenji’s verse,”

the apostrophe (*katarikake no shi*)

and the conversation (*taiwa no shi*)

→ And the *genchô*?

“Fractured Voice”

I welcome your comments and suggestions!

Thank you!

Jon Holt, joholt@pdx.edu